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PAGE 01 STATE 070340

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FOR ASST SEC SISCO

FOLL SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO COLOMBO DACCA ISLAMABAD KATHMANDU
BOMBAY CALCUTTA MADRAS FROM NEW DELHI 13 APR 73 REPEATED TO
YOU QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 4366

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, IN

SUBJ: PRIME MINISTER FACES LONG HOT SUMMER

BEGIN SUMMARY: POPULAR DISSATISFACTION OVER INFLATION AND
ECONOMIC STAGNATION HAS CREATED POLITICAL ATMOSPHERE IN WHICH
OPPOSITION CRITICISM OF PRIME MINISTER FINDS WIDENING AUDIENCE.
FRAGMENTED RIGHTIST PERTIES ARE REVIVING. PRIME MINISTER HAS
CALLED FOR UNITY WITHIN CONGRESS AND AMONG PROGRESSIVE FORCES
AGAINST FORCES OF " RIGHT REACTION;" PRO- MOSCOW COMMUNISTS
(CPI) AGREE. WITHIN CONGRESS, CENTRIST NEHRU FORUM AND EX-
COMMUNISTS IN SOCIALIST FORUM ARE TRADING PUBLIC ACCUSATIONS.
DISSIDENTS IN STATES ARE ALSO ACTIVE. PRIME MINISTER FACES LONG,
HOT SUMMER BUT NO REAL THREAT TO HER POSITION UNLESS MONSOON IS
WEAK AGAIN. END SUMMARY.

1. RIGHTEST REVIVAL: DESPITE INTERNAL PROBLEMS (JANA SANGH' S
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PAGE 02 STATE 070340

MADHOK HAS FORMED NEW PARTY, AND CONGRESS- O LEADERSHIP DIFFERS ON FUTURE COURSE), / BOMBAY ELECTIONS SHOWED RIGHTIST PARTIES ABLE EXPLOIT POPULAR DISSATISFACTION AND INTRA- CONGRESS FRICTION. THEY ARE MAKING IMPRESSION ON MUSLIM VOTERS BY CHAMPIONING THEIR UNEASINESS OVER ALIGARH MUSLIM UNIVERSITY SECULARIZATION. IN BRAHMIN- DOMINATED UTTAR PRADESH, THEIR APPEALS TO LOWER CASTE AND UNTOUCHABLE VOTERS MAY PAY OFF IN 1974 STATE POLL.

2. CONGRESS RESPONSE: ON ECONOMIC FRONT, THREAT TRADE TAKE OVER NOW BEING EFFECTED, BUT WHETHER GOI/ CONGRESS HAVE ADMINISTRATIVE ABILITY/ POLITICAL WILL WILLSEE MAKE MASSIVE EFFORT REQUIRED STILL IN DOUBT. ON POLITICAL FRONT, PRIME MINISTER AND CONGRESS PRESIDENT SHARMA HAVE TOURED NORTHERN INDIA WARNING AGAINST " RIGHT REACTION AND LEFT ADVENTURISM" ABETTED BY UNNAMED, INIMICAL " OUTSIDE FORCES." PRIME MINISTER HAS REACTED SHARPLY TO PRESS/ OPPOSITON CRITICISM OF HER SON' S CORRUPTION- CLOUDED CAR FACTORY, CALLING IT " PERSONAL VILIFICATION."

3. CPI ACTIVITY: CPI RALLIED ESTIMATED 130,000 FOR NATIONAL " MARCH ON DELHI" DURING WHICH PARTY REASSERTED ITS INDEPENDENT POSITION AS CAHMPION OF OPPRESSED AND URGED THAT CONGRESS IMPLEMENT RADICAL POLICIES (LAND REFORM, GRAIN TAKEOVER, ACTION AGAINST " MONOPOLY HOUSES," ETC.) CONGRESS- LINING NATIONAL HERALD AGREED WITH CPI STAND. ON APRIL 1 CPI EXECUTIVE AGREED CONTINUE ENTENTE WITH PROGRESSIVE ELEMENTS IN CONGRESS. CONGRESS CENTRISTS AND EVEN RADICALS LIKE CHANDRA SEKHAR VOCALLY RESENT CPI ROLE AS CONGRESS' PACE- SETTER.

4. CONGRESS FORUM FIGHT: SOCIALIST FORUM INVITATION TO SHARMA TO INAUGUARATE SEMINAR ON " RIGHT REACTION" AT WHICH CPI LEADERS WOULD SPEAK ANGERED CENTER/ RIGHT NEHRU STUDY FORUM, WHICH URGED THAT " DOMINANT" ROLE OF SOCIALIST FORUM EX- COMMUNISTS IN GOI AND PARTY BE REDUCED; NEHRU FORUM ALSO SOUGHT MORE " BALANCE" IN INDIAN FOREIGN POLICY. SOCIALIST FORUM CALLED ITS RIVAL " REACTIONARY." WHEN ACCUSATIONS OF FOREIGN PATRONAGE WERE HURLED, PRIME MINISTER STEPPED IN TO QUESTION ROLE OF FORUMS IN CONGRESS. THEY WILL PROBABLY DISSOLVE, BUT UNDERLYING IDEOLOGICAL/ PERSONAL DIFFERENCES WILL PERSIST.

5. STATE RIVALRIES; DISSIDENT GROUPS IN STATES, NOT RECONCILED TO PRIME MINISTER' S CHOICES OF CHIEF MINISTERS AND STATE CONGRESS PRESIDENTS, HAVE STEPPED UP THEIR CAMPAIGNS. CHIEF MINISTERS
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PAGE 03 STATE 070340

IN GUJARAT AND MYSORE FACE HEAVIEST ATTACK. SO FAR, PRIME

MINISTER HAS REFUSED COUNTENANCE CHANGES AND HAS URGED STATE
UNITS TO RESOLVE PROBLEMS PEACEFULLY.

6. OUTLOOK: AS OPPOSITION ATTACKS INCREASE, PRIME MINISTER
MAY FIND EXHORTATION AND ALLUSION TO INIMICAL DOMESTIC/ FOREIGN
"FORCES" LESUFFICIENT; HER TONE MAY BECOME MORE SHRILL AND
HER TARGETS MORE SPECIFIC. SHE SEEMS TO HAVE CONTAINED INTRA-
CONGRESS DISSIDENCE AT NATIONAL LEVEL, BUT HER NOMINEES IN STATES
ARE NOT OUT OF DANGER. GOOD MONSOON WOULD REDUCE EXTERNAL AND
INTERNAL PRESSURES ON GOVERNMENT AND DO MUCH TO HALD MARGINAL
EROSION IN PRIME MINISTER' S POSITION; ANOTHER WEAK MONSOON
WOULD LEAVE HER IN VERY DIFFICULT STRAITS. (LONGER ANALYSIS BY
AIRGRAM FOLLOWS.)
MOYNIHAN UNQUOTE ROGERS

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